

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8873

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PFOR, ECON, VE

SUBJECT: IRON MINERS END WILDCAT STRIKE

REF: CARACAS 5411

1. THE MILITANCY OF THE CERRO BOLIVAR IRON MINERS EVAPORATED AS THEY RETURNED TO WORK FOR THE EVENING SHIFT ON MAY 23. AS REPORTED REFTEL MOST OTHER WORKERS AT THE ORINOCO MINING COMPANY AND ALL EMPLOYEES OF THE IRON MINES COMPANY HAD REPORTED FOR WORK AS ORDERED ON THE MAY 23 MORNING SHIFT.

2. THE VICE MINISTERS OF INTERIOR AND LABOR AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CORPORACION VENEZOLANA DE GUAYANA (CVG) PROMISED THE WORKERS THAT NO REPRISALS WOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST THOSE WHO STRUCK ILLEGALLY AND THAT THE DISPUTES WHICH PROVOKED THE STRIKE WOULD BE NEGOTIATED ALONG WITH THE NEW CONTRACT BETWEEN THE CVG AND ITS WORKERS. THE CVG ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT IT WOULD IMMEDIATELY BEGIN TO PAY 15 DAYS PAY FOR EACH YEAR WORKED TO THOSE WORKERS WHO MADE APPLICATION IN CONFORMITY WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE OF MAY 16.

3. THE CONFEDERATION OF VENEZUELAN WORKERS (CTV) RENEWED ITS PLEDGE TO FORM A SINGLE UNION AMONG THE IRON WORKERS. CTV INSIDERS EXPECT THIS MOVE TO BE DELAYED A FEW WEEKS IN THE HOPES THAT ANTI-AD SENTIMENT AMONG THE MINERS MAY DECLINE. THE EXECUTIVE
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COUNCIL OF AD IS REPORTED TO BE PLANNING ACTION AGAINST THOSE AD

LEADERS INVOLVED IN THE STRIKE.

4. COMMENT: THE END OF THE STRIKE IS A CLEAR VICTORY FOR THE CVG AND THE GOV. THE WORKERS WERE PRESSUED INTO ABANDONING THEIR WILDCAT STRIKE, AND PROGRESS SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN MADE IN APPLYING A STRICT INTERPRETATION TO THE DOUBLE SEVERANCE PAY PROVISIONS OF THE IRON MINERS' CONTRACT. THIS PROVISION IS ONE OF THE MOST GLARING DIFFERENCES IN THE COMPENSATION OF THE IRON MINERS WHEN COMPARED TO OTHER CVG EMPLOYEES. DESPITE THE GOV SUCCESS IN ONCE MORE DEFEATING A WILDCAT STRIKE IN THE IRON MINES, THE AFFAIR HAS STIRRED NEW DOUBTS AMONG RANK-AND-FILE PETROLEUM WORKERS AS TO HOW THEY WILL FARE AS GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.
SHLAUDEMAM

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